

Message Text

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SUBJECT: FANFANI ATTEMPTS ROLLBACK OF LOCAL CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRAT - COMMUNIST PARTY ACCORDS

REF: ROME 2254, 2188, 1661

SUMMARY: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY SECRETARY FANFANI, STRENGTHENED BY HIS RECENT MANDATE FROM THE SC NATIONAL COUNCIL, SEEMS BENT ON ROLLING BACK THE LOCAL DC-COMMUNIST PARTY ACCORDS REACHED IN VENICE, AVELLINO, AGRIGENTO AND A NUMBER OF SMALLER CENTERS. AS A RESULT OF PRESSURE FROM THE DC NATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND FROM THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, THE VENICE ACCORD ALREADY IS ON THE ROCKS. AT A FEBRUARY 18 MEETING OF THE DC DIRECTORATE, DC LOCAL LEADERS WERE BLUNTLY TOLD TO CONFORM POSTHASTE TO NATIONAL COUNCIL DECISIONS ON RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNIST OPPOSITION. ALTHOUGH THE DC NATIONAL LEADERSHIP MAY BE ABLE TO REVERSE TEMPORARILY THE TREND TOWARD LOCAL DC-PCI ACCORDS, MUCH WILL DEPEND IN THE LONGER TERM ON THE RESULTS OF THE JUNE REGIONAL ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE RECENT CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DC) NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING (ROME 1661) APPROVED THE POLICY OF DC PARTY SECRETARY FANFANI OPPOSING DC-COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) ACCORDS AT EITHER THE LOCAL OR NATIONAL LEVEL. STRENGTHENED WITH THIS
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MANDATE FROM FACTIONS REPRESENTING FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE

DC PARTY, FANFANI NOW IS PROCEEDING WITH AN ATTEMPT TO "ROLL BACK" THE ALREADY EXISTING DC-PCI LOCAL ACCORDS IN VENICE, AVELLINO, AGRIGENTO (SICALY) AND A NUMBER OF SMALL TOWNS. WHILE THESE ACCORDS DO NOT INVOLVE DIRECT PCI PARTICIPATION IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED, THEY HAVE RESULTED IN PCI INSERTION INTO THE GOVERNING MAJORITY VIA NEGOTIATED DC-PCI AGREEMENTS ON MAJOR LOCAL POLICY ISSUES.

2. AS A RESULT OF PRESSURE FROM THE NATIONAL DC LEADERSHIP AND, PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANTLY, FROM THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WHO ANNOUNCED THE RESIGNATION OF THEIR ALDERMEN FROM THE VENICE CITY GOVERNMENT ON FEBRUARY 3, THE DC WITHDREW ITS JUNTA MEMBERS ON FEBRUARY 12. WITH EVIDENT REGRET, THE DC (LEFT WING FACTION) MAYOR FINALLY SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION FEBRUARY 17. ALTHOUGH THE DECEMBER 23 DC-SOCIALIST-PCI ACCORD IN THEORY STILL REMAINS IN EFFECT, IN FACT THE VENICE "MINI-HISTORIC COMPROMISE" APPEARS SHELVED FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

3. IN A MEETING ON FEBRUARY 18, THE DC DIRECTORATE, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PARTY'S LEFT WING, TOOK NOTE OF THE VENICE DEVELOPMENTS AND "FIRMLY INVITED" DC REGIONAL AND PROVISIONAL SECRETARIES TO BRING "ABNORMAL" CASES OF MAJORITY-OPPOSITION PARTY RELATIONSHIPS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL BACK INTO LINE WITH THE DECISIONS OF THE DC NATIONAL COUNCIL. PRESS AND DC SOURCES INDICATE THAT DC LEFT WING REPRESENTATIVES TOOK A CAUTIOUS ATTITUDE AT THE DIRECTORATE MEETING. FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER DE MITA, WHO SUPPORTED THE RECENT DC-PCI ACCORD IN AVELLINO, DENIED ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS LOCAL SITUATION AND AGREED THAT A "CLARIFICATION" IS NECESSARY.

4. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT FANFANI IS DETERMINED TO USE HIS NATIONAL COUNCIL MANDATE TO TRY TO WIPE THE SLATE CLEAN OF OPEN DC-PCI LOCAL ACCORDS PRIOR TO THE IMPORTANT REGIONAL ELECTIONS EXPECTED IN JUNE. IF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN VENICE ARE ANY INDICATION, HE MAY BE ABLE TO DO SO. HOWEVER, THERE IS A TENDENCY AMONG MEMBERS OF THE MODERATE DC MAJORITY TO VIEW SUCH LOCAL ACCORDS AS HARD TO AVOID IN INDIVIDUAL CASES WHERE THE TRADITIONAL CENTER-LEFT MAJORITY HAS PROVED INCAPABLE OF DEALING WITH LONG STANDING LOCAL PROBLEMS.

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THIS TENDENCY IS PARTICULARLY EVIDENT IN THE AREAS OF CITY PLANNING (VENICE AND AGRIGENTO) AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (AVELLINO) WHERE CONFLICTING ECONOMIC INTERESTS APPEAR TO HAVE APRALYZED THE CENTER-LEFT OR, IN THE CASE OF AGRIGENTO, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY. THUS, IF THE DC DOES POORLY IN THE JUNE ELECTIONS, THERE IS A DANGER THAT LOCAL DC-PCI ACCORDS WILL PROLIFERATE UNLESS THE CENTER-LEFT MAJORITY CAN SOMEHOW BE REINVOGIRATED BOTH AT THE LOCAL AND NATIONAL

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